During the last two years, ONGC has incurred an expenditure of about Rs. 105.35 crores on hydrocarbon exploration in Andhra Pradesh.

ONGC have so far located oil and/or gas at the following prospects in Andhra Pradesh:

— Razole
— Narsapur
— Kaza
— Bhimanpalli
— Tatipaka
— Kaikalur
— Pasarlapudi

Gas agencies allotted to war widows and ex-servicemen

864. SHRI PRABHAKAR RAO KALVALA:

SHRI TALARI MANOHAR:

Will he Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases which have been recommended by the Defence Ministry for the allotment of LPG agencies to war widows and disabled ex-servicemen; and

(b) the number of cases in which the recommendations were accepted and LPG agencies allotted to such widows and disabled ex-servicemen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National Gas Transmission Grid

865. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRAVATTOM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ONGC has submitted a proposal for a 7084 mile National Gas Transmission Grid from Trivandruam and Bangalore to Punjab;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) by when a decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (c) The proposal of ONGC for a national gas grid is a part of the long-term perspective plan for the development and utilisation of natural gas. Its implementation will depend on the establishment of adequate reserves of gas and availability of financial resources for its production and utilisation. Exploration is underway for discovering oil and gas reserves.

Flaring of gas

866. SHRI NARAYAN KAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of gas flared during the last three years in the existing oil and gas fields of ONGC and OIL in Upper Assam Valley, Tripura, Bombay High and other oil and gas fields of the country: and

(b) the measures taken by Government so far to utilise this precious fuel commercially?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) About 9000 MCM of gas was flared during he last three years.

(b) The following steps have been taken by Government for maximum utilisation and to minimise flaring:

(i) Installation of additional compression facilities.

(ii) Encouraging consumers to take gas on a fall-back basis, when regular customers fail to lift the committed quantities. Towards this end, a 15 per

cent discount for fall back users has been given in the pricing formula announced by Government.

(iii) Additional commitment of gas in the North-Eastern Region where the primary cause for flaring is low offtake by regular consumers.

Off-shore exploratory drilling

867. SHRI NARAYAN KAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether off-shore exploratory drilling has been taken up in the North-Western part of the Bay of Bengal; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the locations; and if not, by when it is likely to be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) ONGC have recently drilled one well at SME-1 location in Bengal offshore basin and a second well at SMM-1 location is under drilling. Oil India Ltd. had also drilled seven wells in Mahanadi Offshore and three wells in the North East Coast of Orissa in Bay of Bengal. A fourth well in the Offshore North East Coast of Orissa is under drilling.

Transportation of surplus gas

868. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to transport-surplus gas from the Assam oil and gas fields of ONGC and OIL to North Bengal via Jorhat and Guwahati; through trunk pipeline; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Denial of promotion of Assamese Officers of Indian Oil Corporation at Digboi

869. SHRI NAGEN SAIKIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that Assamese Officers working in IOC at Digboi have been deprived of promotion and also of opportunity of getting training abroad; and

(b) if not, what is the number of (i) Assamese and (ii) other officers who have been promoted and how many of them were sent for training abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In the current year, 49 Assamese Officers have been promoted as against 26 other officers. While one Assamese Officers has recently attended training abroad, none of the other 26 officers have been sent for training abroad.

Family Courts

870. SHRIMATI BIJOY CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the concept of Family Courts under the Family Courts Act, 1984, did not find favour with the majority of the State in the country; and

(b) what is the number of States which are responding favourably to the setting up of Family Courts?

THE MINISTTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Family Courts have already been set up in the States of Rajasthan, U.P.